

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA

ERIC MACKIE, JOSHUA BIGGS, and
RUTH MATTISON, individually and on
behalf of others similarly situated

Plaintiffs,

v.

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.,
et al.,

Defendants.

Civ. No.: 0:22-cv-00736-NEB-LIB

**[PROPOSED] STIPULATED
PROTECTIVE ORDER**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information under seal. The parties agree to follow the relevant federal and local rules if they seek to file material under seal.

1.2 GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

This action is likely to involve confidential information, including trade secrets and other valuable research, development, commercial, financial, technical and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public disclosure

and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this Action may be warranted. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of information, to facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of discovery materials, a protective order for such information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential, non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public record of this case.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Action: *Eric Mackie, et al. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc.*, Civ. No.: 0:22-cv-00736-NEB-LIB and any consolidated actions.

2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.

2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the Good Cause Statement.

2.4 Conflicted Expert: any consultant, investigator, or Expert (a) who is an employee of an Automobile Manufacturer Competitor (as defined herein) of a Honda Entity (as defined herein), (b) who was in the employ of an Automobile Manufacturer Competitor of a Honda Entity 1 year prior to the time disclosure is made, or (c) who is serving as a consultant to an Automobile Manufacturer Competitor of a Honda Entity on matters relating the “Earth Dreams” 1.5L direct injection engines, contamination of engine oil in “Earth Dreams” 1.5L direct injection engines, oil dilution in “Earth Dreams” 1.5L direct injection engines, decreased oil viscosity in “Earth Dreams” 1.5L direct injection engines, and/or any premature wear, failure of the engine, bearings, and other internal engine

components in “Earth Dreams” 1.5L direct injection engines that are believed to be related to oil dilution and/or decreased oil viscosity. An “Automobile Manufacturer Competitor” refers to any entity, other than a Honda entity, engaged in the manufacturing or assembling or distribution of Automobiles, including any person, partnership, or corporation which acts for and is under the control of such manufacturer or assembler in connection with the distribution of said Automobiles. A “Honda Entity” refers to any of the following: American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (“AHM”), Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (“HMC”), Honda R&D Co., Ltd. (“HRD”), Honda R&D Americas, Inc. (“HRA”), Honda of America Mfg., Inc. (“HAM”), Honda of Canada Mfg. (“HCM”), Honda de Mexico, S.A. de C.V. (“HDM”), Honda of the UK Manufacturing Ltd. (“HUM”), Honda Manufacturing of Indiana, LLC (“HMIN”), Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, LLC (“HMA”), or Honda Development & Manufacturing of America, LLC (“HDMA”) (each a “Honda Entity” or collectively, the “Honda Entities”). Protected Material may not be disclosed under any circumstances to a Conflicted Expert.

2.5 Counsel (without qualifier): Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

2.6 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

2.7 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

2.8 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action. For purposes of this Stipulated

Protective Order, the term “Expert” excludes any “Conflicted Expert.”

2.9 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action. House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside counsel.

2.10 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

2.11 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a party to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and have appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

2.12 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors, employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their support staff).

2.13 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or Discovery Material in this Action.

2.14 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) and their employees and subcontractors.

2.15 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

2.16 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material from a Producing Party.

3. SCOPE

The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or

compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order are not intended to prohibit a Party from using information it/they obtained from the public domain or from a third-party independent of information derived from Protected Material. To the extent a Receiving Party is aware that Protected Material produced in this action is available in the public domain or was provided to them from a third-party, the Receiving Party shall, pursuant to Section 6, meet-and-confer with the Designating Party before using the document in a public filing or sharing the document or information in a manner that is inconsistent with Section 7.2.

Neither this paragraph, nor anything else in this Stipulated Protective Order, will require a Receiving Party to evaluate whether any document it has obtained from the public domain or from a third-party is also a document a Designating Party has designated as CONFIDENTIAL.

4. DURATION

Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this Action, with or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this Action, including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of time pursuant to applicable law.

5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.
Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that

qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written communications that qualify – so that other portions of the material, documents, items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating Party to sanctions. If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) and section 5.3(b) below), or as otherwise stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or produced.

Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

- (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial proceedings), that the Producing Party affix the legend "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter "CONFIDENTIAL legend") to each page that contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents or materials available for inspection need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated which material it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and before the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be deemed “CONFIDENTIAL.” After the inspecting Party has identified the documents it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the “CONFIDENTIAL legend” to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

- (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify, within 30 days after the transcript is delivered, as Protected Material. All deposition testimony taken in this case shall be treated as Protected Material until the expiration of the thirtieth day after the transcript is delivered to any party or the witness. Within this time period, a Designating Party may serve a Notice of Designation to all parties of record as to specific portions of the testimony that are designated Protected Material, and thereafter only those portions identified in the Notice of Designation shall be protected by the terms of this Order.
- (c) for testimony given in other pretrial or trial proceedings, that the Designating Party identify on the record, before the close of the hearing or other proceeding, all protected testimony.
- (d) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for

any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information or item is stored the legend “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information or item warrant protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected portion(s).

5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If promptly corrected by a Designating Party upon its discovery of an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court’s Scheduling Order. Unless a prompt challenge to a Designating Party’s confidentiality designation is necessary to avoid foreseeable, substantial unfairness, unnecessary economic burdens, or a significant disruption or delay of the litigation, a Party does not waive its right to challenge a confidentiality designation by electing not to mount a challenge promptly after the original designation is disclosed.

6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party will initiate the dispute resolution process (and, if necessary, file a discovery motion) under Local Rule 37.1 et seq.

6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding will be on the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other

parties) may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties will continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL DISPOSITION).

Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons authorized under this Order.

7.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless otherwise ordered by the Court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated "CONFIDENTIAL" only to:

- (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this litigation;
- (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation and who have signed the "Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound" (**Exhibit A**);

- (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (**Exhibit A**);
- (d) the Court and its personnel;
- (e) court reporters and their staff;
- (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (**Exhibit A**);
- (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;
- (h) during their depositions, witnesses in the action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the witness has signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (**Exhibit A**) and (2) they will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the Court. Pages of transcribed deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material must be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and
- (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel, mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION

If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

- (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order;
- (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and
- (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court of its confidential material – and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

9. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

- (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation

is protected by the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

- (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce a Non-Party's confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party's confidential information, then the Party shall:
1. promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement with a Non-Party;
 2. promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the information requested; and
 3. make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-Party, if requested.
- (c) If the Non-Party fails to object or seek a protective order from this Court within 30 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the Court. Absent a Court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in this Court of its Protected Material.

10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order, and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE PROTECTED MATERIAL

When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted to the court.

12. MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this

Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

12.3 Filing Protected Material. Without written permission from the Designating Party or a Court order secured after appropriate notice to all interested persons, a Party may not file in the public record in this action any Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 5.6. Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a Court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material under seal is denied by the Court, then the Receiving Party may file the information in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the Court.

13. FINAL DISPOSITION

Within 90 days after the final disposition of this action, as defined in paragraph 4, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 90-day deadline that (1) identifies (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed; and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to retain an archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts, legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert reports, attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such materials contain

Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or constitute Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in Section 4 above (DURATION).

14. Any willful violation of this Order may be punished by financial or evidentiary sanctions, or other appropriate action at the discretion of the Court.

IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

DATED: March 2, 2023

/s/ Mathew D. Schelkopf

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DATED: March 2, 2023

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FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: _____

HON. MICHAEL R. WILNER
United States Magistrate Judge